

Friends in time of need pull away after mom sobers up

DEAR ABBY: I am a single mother of two young children. I decided to have gastric bypass surgery several years ago. Nine months after the procedure, I began drinking alcohol. The drinking became progressively heavier, and within a few months I was a full-blown alcoholic. It's as if I gave up binge eating for binge drinking. It took a year of struggle to stop, with the help of my friends and family, who pushed me to seek inpatient treatment.

I am now almost three months sober. But with sobriety I have lost a lot of the kindness from my support system. Despite my many apologies, some have told me of their disgust for me, and others have cut ties to me completely.

I believe their efforts to encourage me to seek help were driven by the fact I was a drunk mom. They wanted help for me so I could be a fit parent. However, now that I am in recovery, they no longer want to be a part of my life. The shame is real, and so is the loneliness.

I am now at a point where I need to ask: Am I justified to feel insulted by their lack of support and happiness for me now that I'm healthy and being the best mom I can? Or should I accept that I really messed up and be grateful I had help at all?

— SOBER BUT SAD IN IOWA

DEAR SOBER BUT SAD: It would be healthier to keep your eye on the positive and be grateful for the help you were given. It would also be healthier for you to associate with people who make you feel good about yourself, which may not be your family and current friends. In the past I have advised that sometimes it's necessary to build a support network, or "family of choice." And this is what I'm recommending you do.

DEAR ABBY: I turned 17 last month. I have a boyfriend who is 20, but my parents don't know about him yet. He wants to get an apartment and have me move in with him on my 18th birthday. However, I promised my mother and father that I would take care of them. I want him to find an apartment nearby, with the promise that I'll move in with him when I'm ready. How can I do that without disappointing him or

hurting my parents' feelings?
— UNDECIDED IN PENNSYLVANIA
DEAR UNDECIDED: Stop hiding this man from your parents. What you're doing is immature and dishonest. If his feelings for you are sincere, he would want to meet them, and he wouldn't ask you to do anything you weren't ready to do.

While the idea of moving in with him may seem romantic, there are more important things you need to accomplish before you do. First is to become self-supporting so you can live independently ON YOUR OWN. That way, if things don't work out with him as you would like, you won't be out on the street with nowhere to go.

Children weren't put on this Earth to spend their adult lives taking care of their parents. Unless yours are the exception, both of them should be young and vigorous enough to take care of each other.

DEAR ABBY: My mother-in-law has the means to buy almost anything she wants. She's a shopper, a borderline hoarder, yet very generous to her children. She buys expensive and unwanted gifts for all her kids — satisfying her shopping urges by getting us doubles of her latest cooking gadget, vacuum cleaner or 10-pound box of chocolate we shouldn't be eating in the first place.

While we're not poor, we sure could use the money she's wasting on these silly gifts. How do we tell her that it's awkward for us to receive an expensive vacuum when we need help with school tuition for our kids? Is it wrong for us to look a gift horse in the mouth, or insensitive of her to flaunt her purchasing power while we're struggling?

— REGRETFULLY UNGRATEFUL

DEAR REGRETFULLY: I'm not going to label your mother-in-law as insensitive or you as ungrateful. I do think the time has come for you and her son to have a frank talk with her and explain that, while you are grateful for the gifts, you could better use the money she's spending on them for help with her grandchildren's school tuition. If that offends her, so be it, but if she loves her grandchildren, I don't think it should.

Editorial: In a bad omen, fire season begins early

Mike McNally
The Associated Press

It would appear that not everyone got the memo about how February's unusually wet weather might have helped to put a damper on this year's fire season.

But this week's shockingly early fire near the North Santiam State Recreational Area serves as an important reminder: Fire season in the mid-valley now lasts almost year-round.

The cause of the fire, which was first reported on Tuesday afternoon in Marion County and then jumped the river into Linn County, still is not known. (The blaze was reportedly in an area that recently had been slash-burned, but it's not known if that's a factor.)

What is known for certain is that as of Wednesday, the fire had impacted nearly 200 acres of brush and timber, making it a large blaze by mid-valley standards. Worse, the fire threatened almost 50 homes and 30 outbuildings and prompted evacuations, another rarity in the mid-valley. Fortunately, no structures were damaged in the blaze, and no injuries were reported.

But it could well be that fires forcing evacuations will become a more frequent occurrence in the mid-valley. And if fire season now is stretching out to fill almost the entire calendar, that means we need to respect it year-round, instead of assuming, as we sometimes do, that some

seasons are somehow immune to wildfire.

One of the first casualties of the Santiam Park fire was open burning season: A burn ban was issued in a hurry in both Linn and Marion counties and will be in effect until further notice. That "further notice" could be a long stretch — and even if the ban gets lifted soon, you can be sure that additional bans will be in place before we get too much deeper into spring.

All of which goes to prove that it's never a bad time to review your preparations for wildfire — and to remind yourself, as the warmer weather lures you out into our wildlands, about the necessity to be as careful with fire now as you would normally be in August, at the peak of fire season.

Officials this week suggested that the start of spring is a good time for homeowners to make sure their properties have an extra measure of protection against wildfire — so here are a few extra chores you could consider adding to your spring break list.

- Keep roofs, gutters, and eaves clear of all leaves, pine needles, and other flammable debris.
- Remove dead vegetation for a minimum of 30 feet around your house.
- Prune trees and have grass kept short and green to keep fire on the ground and more manageable by fire crews.
- Call before you burn yard debris. Check with

your local fire agency or air protection authority to learn if there are any burning restrictions and if a permit is required. (In the case of Linn County, wait until the burn ban is lifted.)

The early signs certainly suggest that, despite our wet February, this year's fire season could be another rough one. Don't do anything that will make it worse for you, your neighbors or for the mid-valley's firefighters.

A tribute for Waibel

Mona Waibel, the former mayor of Sweet Home and civic leader who died last year, set a high mark for community volunteerism.

So it is fitting that the Presidents Club VIP Awards, given each year for service to the Sweet Home community, now bear Waibel's name. The Mona Waibel Hero Awards were presented Saturday at the Sweet Home Chamber of Commerce awards banquet.

Bob Dalton of the Presidents Club (and Waibel's son-in-law), put it well: "Mona defined what volunteering was about. Her whole life here in Sweet Home was dedicated to community service and making our community better. She broke down the walls of indifference to get things done, found good in everyone and wasn't afraid to speak up for the betterment of all. She did it with enthusiasm, respect and a smile, the same qualities that our recipients here tonight share." ■

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weather

TONIGHT
Spotty showers late

Baker City 39
Comfort Index™ 4

La Grande 38
Comfort Index™ 4

Enterprise 36
Comfort Index™ 6

TUE
Mostly cloudy

Baker City 55 / 33
5

La Grande 51 / 30
5

Enterprise 48 / 29
2

WED
Mostly cloudy

Baker City 51 / 32
1

La Grande 49 / 32
3

Enterprise 47 / 30
2

THU
Cloudy, showers around

Baker City 52 / 31
2

La Grande 50 / 33
1

Enterprise 46 / 30
0

FRI
Times of clouds and sun

Baker City 54 / 27
5

La Grande 50 / 28
3

Enterprise 47 / 27
3

Comfort Index takes into account how the weather will feel based on a combination of factors. A rating of 10 feels very comfortable while a rating of 0 feels very uncomfortable.

ALMANAC

TEMPERATURES	Baker City	La Grande	Elgin
High Saturday	50°	49°	53°
Low Saturday	38°	40°	37°
PRECIPITATION (inches)	0.26	0.21	Trace
Saturday	0.26	0.21	Trace
Month to date	0.61	0.22	0.98
Normal month to date	0.60	1.08	1.66
Year to date	3.07	4.37	10.87
Normal year to date	1.98	3.85	7.16

AGRICULTURAL INFO.

HAY INFORMATION TUESDAY

Lowest relative humidity	45%
Afternoon wind	SW at 4 to 8 mph
Hours of sunshine	1.9
Evapotranspiration	0.07

RESERVOIR STORAGE (through midnight Sunday)

Phillips Reservoir	12% of capacity
Unity Reservoir	44% of capacity
Owyhee Reservoir	53% of capacity
McKay Reservoir	73% of capacity
Wallowa Lake	N.A.
Thief Valley Reservoir	107% of capacity

STREAM FLOWS (through midnight Saturday)

Grande Ronde at Troy	7770 cfs
Thief Valley Reservoir near North Powder	N.A.
Burnt River near Unity	28 cfs
Umatilla Reservoir near Gibbon	959 cfs
Minam River at Minam	525 cfs
Powder River near Richland	841 cfs

SATURDAY EXTREMES

NATION (for the 48 contiguous states)
High: 85° El Centro, Calif.
Low: 7° Land O'Lakes, Wis.
Wettest: 1.07" Foss, Okla.

OREGON
High: 64° Ontario
Low: 24° Crater Lake
Wettest: 0.33" Lakeview

WEATHER HISTORY
Amarillo, Texas, received nearly 21 inches of snow on March 25, 1934. Most of it melted shortly after reaching the ground. Actual snow depth never exceeded 5 inches.

SUN & MOON

Sunrise	6:47 a.m.	6:45 a.m.
Sunset	7:11 p.m.	7:12 p.m.
Moonrise	none	12:56 a.m.
Moonsset	9:45 a.m.	10:24 a.m.

MOON PHASES

Last	New	First	Full
Mar 27	Apr 5	Apr 12	Apr 19

REGIONAL CITIES

City	TUE. HI/Lo/W	WED. HI/Lo/W	City	TUE. HI/Lo/W	WED. HI/Lo/W
Astoria	56/38/c	60/39/c	Lewiston	55/38/c	56/39/c
Bend	50/30/pc	46/32/c	Longview	57/34/pc	60/37/r
Boise	57/41/sh	57/39/sh	Mecham	47/27/c	48/31/c
Brookings	56/44/pc	54/44/r	Medford	61/40/pc	59/38/r
Burns	51/34/sf	50/30/c	Newport	54/41/pc	54/42/c
Coos Bay	56/41/pc	55/43/c	Olympia	58/34/c	61/33/pc
Corvallis	59/38/pc	56/39/c	Ontario	63/41/sh	59/38/sh
Council	48/31/sf	47/33/sh	Pasco	62/36/pc	60/37/c
Elgin	50/29/c	50/33/c	Pendleton	56/36/pc	54/38/c
Eugene	60/38/pc	56/40/c	Portland	59/42/pc	59/41/c
Hermiston	60/35/pc	58/39/c	Powers	58/40/pc	55/42/r
Hood River	56/35/pc	55/39/c	Redmond	55/33/pc	51/32/c
Imnaha	52/31/r	52/35/c	Roseburg	62/41/pc	60/41/r
John Day	50/34/pc	48/32/c	Salem	60/40/pc	59/41/c
Joseph	48/28/sh	46/31/c	Spokane	53/32/c	56/35/pc
Kennewick	61/33/pc	58/37/c	The Dalles	58/38/pc	56/40/c
Klamath Falls	50/34/sf	48/30/r	Ukiah	47/28/pc	47/29/c
Lakeview	45/32/sf	44/31/c	Walla Walla	58/41/pc	58/44/c

RECREATION FORECAST TUESDAY

ANTHONY LAKES A snow shower	27	16
PHILLIPS LAKE A snow shower	47	29
MT. EMILY REC. Some sun; chilly	39	24
BROWNLEE RES. A morning shower	54	33
EAGLE CAP WILD. A snow shower	34	18
EMIGRANT ST. PARK Clouds and sun	43	24
WALLOWA LAKE Spotty showers	48	28
MCKAY RESERVOIR Partly sunny	55	34
THIEF VALLEY RES. A p.m. shower	55	33
RED BRIDGE ST. PARK Mostly cloudy	51	30

Weather(W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow-f ice



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